

The NREL Diversity Plan

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Introduction

NREL's personnel policies and practices are built upon a core set of values which include the philosophy of diversity. This philosophy includes a strong belief that all employees should be treated with dignity and respect. In accordance with this, NREL does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, ethnic group, religion, gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, or Veteran status. It is also NREL's policy to comply with all national and local laws pertaining to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.

In its ongoing commitment to become a diversity leader, NREL has developed a Diversity Program that will promote intellectual and management excellence by recruiting, developing, training, and retaining a qualified, diverse workforce to meet our customers' needs. The primary focus areas for this program are:

- 1 – Workforce
- 2 – Educational Outreach
- 3 – Community Involvement and Outreach
- 4 – Subcontracting
- 5 – Economic Development and Technology Transfer

The NREL Diversity Plan, which centers around these four major areas, was developed to build on the best practices from our managing partners, MRI, Bechtel, and Battelle. In order to develop and implement a world-class Diversity Program that will help guide us in conducting our Science, Technology and Deployment activities, we at NREL must embrace a proactive diversity issues. We believe this plan embodies both our personal and corporate values and sets the course for future contracts.

Promoting diversity at NREL will require all employees to participate in – and take responsibility for – moving the process forward. Employees will also be encouraged to help in effecting changes that will promote opportunities for growth and advancement. Although managers have the responsibility for hiring and promoting staff members, we are **all** responsible for creating a work environment in which diversity is valued and embraced.

“Like portfolios, organizations benefit from diversity. Effective leaders resist the urge to people their staffs only with others who look or sound or think just like themselves...they look for good people from many molds, and then they encourage them to speak out, even to disagree.”

- Warren G. Bennis, *Distinguished Professor of Business Administration* –
- *University of Southern California*

Executive Management Letter to Staff

HR Director Statement

Development of the NREL Diversity Plan

The U.S. Department of Energy is firmly committed to promoting and encouraging diversity among its personnel and activities. Early in the proposal phase of NREL's new, multiyear contract, the Laboratory's new managing and operating partners, Midwest Research Institute (MRI), Bechtel, and Battelle, emphasized that diversity would be an integral part of the ongoing success of the Laboratory. NREL's partners believe that supporting and encouraging diversity in the workplace is productive for employees, stakeholders, and customers alike. They further believe that a well-managed, diverse workforce will expand the Laboratory's base of knowledge, skills, and understanding, thus enabling NREL to be more responsive to the needs of its customers.

As a part of its new five-year plan for bringing NREL to the next level of excellence, the Laboratory considers this proactive Diversity Program to be critical in its success in leading the renewable energy community into the next millennium. The NREL Diversity Plan was prepared by a Diversity Review Committee from across the Laboratory, consisting of a team from Communications and Public Affairs, Contracts and Business Services, Deployment Support, Education Programs, Human Resources Office, Stakeholder Partnerships, and Executive Management. It was reviewed and adopted by NREL early in 1999. The role of this Committee is to create the NREL Diversity Plan, implement the goals and strategies, and review and report on the milestones as listed on pages 25-27 in this document.

Since its founding, NREL has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to people and to fair employment practices. As the Laboratory has grown and expanded, its workforce has become more diverse. NREL believes that this diverse workforce helps the company realize its full potential by allowing all employees to be more productive in the workforce.

Commitment to Diversity

NREL Mission Statement

To lead the nation toward a sustainable energy future by developing renewable energy technologies, improving energy efficiency, advancing related science and engineering, and facilitating deployment.

The NREL Vision Statement

NREL will be the world's preeminent institution for advancing innovative renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies from concept to adoption. By partnering with our stakeholders, we will support a sustainable energy future for the nation and the world. In achieving this next level of excellence, NREL will set the standard for others.

NREL Diversity Vision Statement

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory will be recognized as a diversity leader among its employees, the stakeholder community, and the U.S. Department of Energy.

Workforce

NREL recognizes that its strength lies in people and that, to be successful in the 21st century, our workforce should mirror the society in which we live and work. NREL also places a high value on creating an inclusive environment that benefits from diversity at all levels, values individual differences, and enables all NREL people to develop and contribute to their fullest potential.

Realizing that the face of the workforce is changing, NREL is tapping into the world's resources by recruiting on an international level. Through the visitor exchange program, research professionals come to NREL from all over the world to work in our world-class research facilities. This exchange of ideas and knowledge between cultures helps lead to a more creative staff and a better understanding and acceptance of differences among people.

Communicating Diversity Initiatives

NREL maintains an internal communication network in order to keep its employees informed. Both the monthly newsletter, *Inside NREL*, and the weekly newsletter, *NREL Now*, are currently used to inform and educate employees. Training opportunities are also listed, and employees are encouraged to attend classes as offered. NREL policies and procedures are currently published on the Intranet, thus making them accessible to all employees. In addition, the Human Resources Office Web site, http://www.nrel.net.nrel.gov/src_nrel1.html, provides information on the appropriate contacts for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues and identifies the EEO Officer.

Goal:

- Enhance NREL's internal communication network regarding diversity initiatives.

Strategies:

- Establish a diversity Web Site at NREL. The site will not only communicate NREL's EEO policies, but will also provide information on events and opportunities for training and mentoring.
- Use the current NREL employee publications to communicate diversity initiatives to employees.
- Conduct a nine-item survey on diversity in the workplace. A survey will be given in spring 1999, then again in fall 1999.

Promoting Diversity in Recruiting and Hiring

The goal of NREL's recruiting program is to increase the pool of highly qualified and diverse candidates from which hiring selections are made. The process begins with strategic planning sessions with senior management. Currently done on an as-needed basis, these meetings are designed to determine each center's anticipated staffing needs

and to update each director regarding areas of underrepresentation within each center or office.

Two ways in which NREL is seeking to address these needs are networking and advertising. Networks have been established with local and national professional organizations such as the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, the Society of Women Engineers, the National Society of Black Engineers, the Center for Women's Employment and Education, the Urban League, MiCasa, and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Office.

Goals:

- In an attempt to reach a more diverse recruitment audience, NREL will design a campaign to more proactively advertise for underrepresented populations.
- Develop an aggressive and targeted recruitment program that aligns strategically with NREL's mission, ensures excellence in hiring, and promotes diversity.

Strategies:

- Focus recruiting efforts on the underrepresented professional populations in science, engineering, and management, in order to improve diversity among the professional staff at NREL.
- NREL will increase its advertising in publications (e.g., *Winds of Change*, *Minority Engineer*, and *Diversity Careers*) directed toward underrepresented minorities and women.
- The Laboratory will seek increased recruiting and advertising through the Internet.
- Hold quarterly strategic planning sessions with each center/office director to anticipate staffing needs and track the progress toward meeting their center/office Affirmative Action (AA) goals.
- Identify and eliminate hiring processes that appear to be restrictive, limiting or that create an adverse impact on protected classes.
- Work closely with NREL's managing partners (MRI, Bechtel, and Battelle) to share resources and thus strengthen recruiting possibilities.

College Recruiting

NREL supports several academic (including university-level) programs whose goal is to increase the participation of minority students and women in the scientific and engineering professions. The Laboratory participates in a recruiting program that is focused on colleges and universities with a high percentage of minority students, in particular Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI). In addition, NREL cooperates with AIME (Advancing Minorities Interest in Engineering) for networking opportunities within the HBCU/MI community. These programs are a valuable recruiting source for co-op students, interns, postdoctoral students and full-time employees.

Goal:

- Strengthen NREL's relationships with schools and communities by targeting college-recruiting programs to identify, attract, and hire outstanding employees, with a focused effort on recruiting qualified individuals from underrepresented populations.

Strategies:

- Work closely with AIME to identify appropriate recruits.
- Create a college-recruiting program focused on colleges and universities that have a high percentage of minority and female students.
- Design an internship program to mentor new recruits from HBCUs/MIs.

Welfare-to-Work Program

The welfare-to-work program at NREL is currently two years old. During that time, we have identified several positions in the Laboratory that are ideal for welfare-to-work participants and have invited the latter to NREL for interviews. NREL must address several challenges however, before this program can become successful. One of those challenges is the location of NREL in the suburbs. Candidates for this program primarily live in the Denver metropolitan and East Denver areas. NREL does participate in the RTD Eco-Pass program, which allows NREL employees access to the public transportation system. In addition, representatives from NREL attend a career fair for welfare-to-work participants, send weekly job postings to a number of state and county agencies, and review applications received from these agencies. Qualified candidates are invited for an interview.

Goal:

- Expand NREL's welfare-to-work program and hire a minimum of one participant.

Strategies:

- Investigate the support systems necessary for a successful welfare-to-work program and assess the systems in place at NREL to identify any gaps. Once the gaps are identified, design the training programs and other support systems needed to make this program successful.
- Continue outreach efforts by networking with state and local agencies.

Assuring Accountability for Diversity Initiatives

Initiating diversity programs and activities at NREL is a shared responsibility between the staff at the Human Resources Office and managers at the Laboratory. Together, we work toward defining our culture at NREL in terms of a shared set of values. One of these values is providing all employees at NREL with an opportunity to learn, share, and grow as individuals. During the next millenium, the workforce will become older, more female, and more racially and ethnically diverse. NREL recognizes the need to treat these and all individuals in a dignified and respectful manner.

Goals:

- Carry out the Laboratory's commitment to diversity, equal opportunity, and affirmative action.
- Create a working environment in which all employees feel responsibility for the success of the Diversity Program.

Strategies:

- Center/office directors will regularly review and analyze workforce statistics, goals, objectives, and achievements. As part of the job performance evaluation process, center/office directors will be held accountable for meeting diversity targets within their organizations.
- Center/office directors are designated as responsible personnel and will be held accountable for meeting specific diversity targets.
- All managers will receive training in EEO and Affirmative Action laws and regulations to help promote greater understanding.
- Appoint a Diversity and Affirmative Action Coordinator.

Celebrating Diversity

The new paradigm for diversity education calls for learning about people and cultures other than your own. Learning is part of a cultural change process and, as such, occurs gradually over time, not during one training session. The workforce at NREL is an internationally diverse workforce and gives the employee population the opportunity to interact with people from across the globe. As we move into a more competitive international environment, this understanding will ultimately assist NREL in the global marketplace.

Goals:

- Create an environment within NREL that promotes trust and support, and that fosters participation by all NREL employees in the Diversity Program.
- Appoint an NREL volunteer group interested in promoting the Diversity Program.

Strategies:

- With assistance from the volunteer group, the Diversity Coordinator will organize celebrations of diversity events such as Black History Month, Women's History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Disabilities Awareness Month, Veterans celebrations, and Asian-American heritage observation. The emphasis will be on education of the employee population regarding the history of the culture and people for whom the event has special meaning. Whenever possible, NREL will celebrate these events in partnership with stakeholder organizations within the community.
- NREL employees and managers will be recognized for excellence in diversity. The Diversity Review Committee will establish criteria for the recognition.

- Networking/support groups will be established for various groups of employees, such as the African-American, Hispanic, or gay/lesbian communities. Group members will share career strategies and concerns and form support networks within NREL.

Women's Program

In June 1995, NREL established a Women's Program, which is part of the Laboratory Program for Women sponsored by DOE. The program monitors and supports the advancement of female employees throughout DOE facilities. The group identified key issues important to the audience; from these issues, the group set the following goals for the program: develop a mentoring program, identify career advancement strategies, develop outreach and recruiting tools, institute a seminar series on women's workplace issues, and define administrative assistant concerns.

Some early accomplishments of the group include: establishing a seminar series, sending 20 NREL women to hear Hillary Clinton speak on working women's issues, preparing and analyzing a survey on administrative assistant concerns, publishing a brochure featuring notable women at NREL, and establishing a bookshelf in the library containing material on women in the workplace, resource lists, and videotapes of all seminars.

Goal:

- The Women's program will be re-initiated at NREL.

Strategy:

- The Diversity Coordinator will assess the present status of the program and take the necessary steps to re-initiate it.

Educational Outreach

Internal to NREL

NREL will continue to advance and nurture diversity awareness concepts throughout all appropriate NREL training courses, including a focus on developing an appreciation for the strengths that people with different backgrounds, experiences, and voices can bring to NREL. These concepts are interwoven and reinforced through our training classes and are a part of our vendor requirements.

Staff Development Programs

NREL has implemented training in Human Diversity for its employees. A new training vendor has been selected, and the content and objectives of the course have been revised to reflect current trends and to include valuing diversity as well as managing it. In other courses, such as Sexual Harassment Awareness, the concepts presented are aligned with those from the Diversity class.

Diversity education occurs outside the classroom as well as inside. Other services, such as those offered by the Human Resources Office, address issues arising out of a diverse workforce. Team-building training, team mentoring, and additional tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and conflict resolution training are offered upon request. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is also available to all employees. Additional courses that include concepts relating to diversity are Interviewing Skills and Managing Conflict.

Goal:

- Create a working environment in which all employees feel responsibility for the success of the Diversity Program.

Strategies:

- Increase the percentage of NREL employees attending diversity classes.
- Create a mentoring program to give employees the opportunity to coach new employees.

External to NREL

NREL's science, mathematics, engineering, and technology education programs provide leadership, coordination, and direction for the Laboratory's interactions, policies, and partnerships with students, teachers, and academic institutions from grade school through graduate school. Education programs also include participation in public- and private-sector initiatives to enhance science and technology education basic to understanding energy efficiency and renewable energy. One overarching goal of NREL's education programs is to develop and increase the quantity, quality, and diversity of students preparing to participate as scientific and technical professionals in areas related to DOE and NREL missions.

The need for increasing diversity among students is two-fold. Jobs requiring scientific and technical knowledge and skill are increasing. At the same time, demographic trends indicate that unless more individuals from underrepresented populations are attracted into and prepared for scientific and technical fields, the future need for qualified scientific and technical professionals, particularly in certain disciplines, may exceed the available supply.

Equally compelling is the need to diversify the workforce because diversity contributes to excellence in our work. The distinctive perspectives found in the complex richness of a diverse workforce engender creativity and innovation that are critical in solving complex problems related to energy, the environment, and economic competitiveness.

To develop diversity for a future workforce, NREL conducts education programs at all educational levels, from grade school to graduate school. NREL also participates in partnerships designed to improve critical elements of the education system that affect the quality of science, mathematics, engineering, and technology education for all students. Included are those future scientists or future decision makers from populations traditionally underserved or underrepresented in science and technology. Generally speaking, underrepresented populations are women, the disabled, and ethnic groups such as African-Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and certain Pacific Islanders.

Undergraduate Student Programs and Partnerships

Undergraduate students participate in research at NREL through DOE's Energy Research Fellowship program and through internships sponsored by NREL research and technology groups at NREL. Efforts are being made to ensure that a representative percentage of students selected to participate at NREL are from populations traditionally underrepresented in science and engineering, including women, underrepresented ethnic minorities, and the disabled. In 1998, NREL's education programs were honored by Colorado State University President Albert Yates for recruiting underrepresented populations in DOE-sponsored undergraduate research participation programs at NREL.

Research and education partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities are an important component of NREL's education programs. Included are partnerships with the following institutions:

- Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio
- Clark Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia
- Vista University, Port Elizabeth, South Africa
- Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia
- Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena, Mississippi
- Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Texas Southern University—School of Technology, Houston, Texas

Partnerships include support for research projects at these schools, opportunities for undergraduate students to participate as interns at NREL, and support for outreach programs to high-school students in the geographical areas surrounding the school. In the case of Texas Southern University, the high-school outreach program includes an education enrichment field trip to NREL as well as a two-week academy on the university campus. All participating students are African-American.

Teacher Programs

Because teachers are key to reaching students at every level, a number of NREL's education programs target teachers of science, mathematics, engineering, and technology. These targeted programs are closely aligned with DOE's effort to contribute to the national education priority of ensuring that all students have competent and enthusiastic teachers, including those students from populations traditionally underrepresented in science and engineering. Selected teachers from Colorado schools participating in NREL education programs teach in schools having between 37% and 87% of students who are from designated minority groups.

As a whole, the state of Colorado has approximately 28% minority students and 9.9% students with disabilities. NREL education programs work collaboratively with the state, with school districts, and with specific schools to improve critical elements of their science, mathematics, and technology education programs. Specifically, NREL education staff participates on committees, boards, and task forces that develop academic standards and assessments, as well as school-to-work opportunities. In addition, as described earlier, NREL's teacher programs help develop teachers as leaders for state, district, and school-based systemic improvement of science, mathematics, and technology education. NREL makes a special effort to include teachers from schools having high percentages of underrepresented students or teachers who themselves are members of underrepresented populations.

School-to-Career Programs

Finally, NREL participates in programs that support underrepresented students in their transition from the K-12 education system into higher education. NREL's Director of Education Programs, for example, actively participates as a member of the Corporate Board of Directors of the Women in Engineering Program at the University of Colorado in Boulder. NREL Education Programs staff are also strong supporters of Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA), a school- and community-based program to encourage underrepresented students to pursue careers in science and engineering.

School-to-Career Education Programs

Goals:

- Continue to strengthen partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Promote efforts to build partnerships with academic institutions, in addition to HBCUs, that have significant percentages of students from populations traditionally underrepresented in science and engineering.
- Promote the development of teacher enhancement programs that include an increased number of educators who teach or are themselves from populations that are traditionally underrepresented in science and engineering.

Strategies:

- Encourage increased placements for undergraduate and graduate students from educational institutions serving underrepresented populations.
- Evaluate NREL's school-to-career education programs for qualities that may be likely to encourage transition from the academic world of science and engineering to the science and engineering workforce.
- Encourage targeted recruiting of teachers from schools having significant populations of students from underrepresented populations.
- Assess the feasibility of instituting a high-school-level school-to-career initiative that includes a research component, and that targets students traditionally underrepresented in science and technology.

Systemic Education Programs

Goals:

- Promote partnerships with local, regional, and state education institutions, as well as public- and private-sector initiatives dedicated to improving science, mathematics, and technology education for students from underrepresented populations.
- Continue to promote systemic improvement of science, mathematics, and technology education for all students.

Strategies:

- Encourage NREL's comprehensive partnerships with selected schools or school districts having high percentages of students from traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Support the efforts of entities such as Colorado MESA that promote changes in policies, practices, and processes for improving science, mathematics, and engineering education for students underrepresented in science and technology careers.

Community Involvement and Outreach

Community involvement is a critical component of NREL's mission. The Laboratory, through its programs and actions, wishes to enhance its role as a good, responsible neighbor. Local activities center on the communities of Golden and Denver plus Jefferson County. NREL and the Communication and Public Affairs Office wish to enhance their community involvement and outreach to promote a culture of trust and partnership with the Laboratory.

Community Sponsorship

NREL's community outreach activities include memberships and participation in various business and professional organizations. All of these organizations promote diversity in their missions and, to some degree, in their membership. These include the following:

Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce

NREL is a corporate member of this organization; our staff participates in its activities by networking with members of the African-American business community and Denver's civic and corporate communities at large by participating in this manner, NREL assists in facilitating the economic empowerment of the African-American community.

Golden Chamber of Commerce

Membership in this organization provides NREL with opportunities for networking with the Golden business community and civic officials in order to promote the healthy business environment in the community in which NREL exists. Additionally, it provides NREL with an opportunity to communicate the mission and values of the Laboratory to the local business community. Currently, NREL has a role on the Economic Development Council and the Visitors and Convention Committee.

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Through its membership in this organization, NREL increases its opportunities for professional development, leadership, and political awareness. In addition, networking opportunities with the Hispanic business community are created.

Denver Urban League

The League is a community-based service agency specializing in employment, training, housing, youth, and education programs for economically disadvantaged populations in metro Denver. NREL maintains a membership with the organization and, through this, access to quality applicants for employment, opportunities to network with corporate peers, and the goodwill of the League's board and volunteers.

Minority Enterprises, Inc.

NREL is a major sponsor of Minority Enterprises Inc.'s (MEI) annual exposition in the Denver Metro area. MEI is an association devoted to advancement of small minority and women-owned businesses through business connections. Its annual exposition is an opportunity for NREL to seek business partners from these diverse communities and to

be a visible supporter of their success. NREL's Contracts and Business Services staff is actively involved with the group and the annual exposition, giving NREL a very high stature within the minority community.

Adelante Mujer, Inc.

Adelante Mujer was formed to sponsor professional development conferences for Hispanic women in the state of Colorado and will be expanded to a national level in 2000. NREL has sponsored the participation of Hispanic women employees in some of the statewide conferences, and participated in trade shows and job fairs. The group has existed for 20 years; a member of NREL's Communications and Public Affairs Office has been involved in the group during her 19-year career at NREL.

Outreach activities currently include a minimum of one community meeting per year, to which our nearest neighbors from the Pleasant View community are invited. At these meetings, our neighbors can learn about NREL, including its Environment, Safety & Health activities, and to voice any concerns that they may have about the Laboratory and its operations. In addition, NREL holds periodic meetings with community leaders, which include invitees from Denver's diverse business and civic communities.

Community Outreach Programs

CLOUT (Coalition for Learning Opportunities and United Tutors)

NREL established CLOUT to augment the Denver Public Schools reading program for fourth grade students enrolled in inner city Denver Schools, a district that includes high percentages of ethnic minorities. CLOUT involves both corporate sponsorship in the form of financial support from Midwest Research Institute, NREL's ranking managing partner, and the involvement of NREL staff in tutoring students. At this time, more than two dozen NREL staff meet at least once each week with students at a selected school to tutor them in reading. The students have been identified as those whose reading skills fall below their grade level. Other partners in the CLOUT program include DOE's Golden Field Office, the Urban League of Denver, and Servicios de La Roza.

Visitors Center Tours

NREL hosts school groups (grade school through college) at the Visitors Center, where students can learn about renewable energy efficiency and energy technologies through presentations and tours that include the center's interactive exhibits. School groups come from all parts of Denver, surrounding suburbs, and neighboring counties. Many schools have diverse populations representing most ethnic groups. Also, NREL invites area schools to visit the center. Summer programs bring students from throughout the greater Denver metropolitan area, in addition to neighboring states such as New Mexico and Arizona with their large numbers of Native American students.

The number of visitors to NREL's Visitors Center has increased steadily since the center opened four years ago (3000 in 1997, 6000 in 1998, and 8000 in 1999). About half of those visitors were students. Although the demographics of the schools have not been recorded, the Visitor Center's director has estimated that the numbers of Hispanic, African-American, and Native American students have increased significantly from the first year of the center's operations.

Colorado Sustainability Summit -- Work Group

NREL is one of the sponsors for the Colorado Sustainability Summit, which is an affiliated, concurrent event of the National Town Meeting sponsored by the President's Council on Sustainable Development. The purpose of the summit is to inform municipalities in Colorado about sustainability opportunities. Through roundtable discussions, speakers from diverse backgrounds – including Africa-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans – have been invited to share their perspectives with others from the Colorado community.

Community Involvement and Outreach

Goals:

- Continue to strive to make NREL well known within minority communities as an active supporter of business opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses from diverse populations.
- Provide additional NREL staff and financial support for community organizations.
- Show NREL's ethnically diverse staff that the Laboratory is interested in and willing to support outreach to diverse business communities.

Strategies:

- Recently, NREL's Communications and Public Affairs Office identified opportunities for expanding involvement in and support of Denver's ethnically diverse community, with the objectives of making NREL more widely known as a supporter of diverse organizations; creating new business opportunities for the Laboratory with these organizations; and showing NREL's staff that NREL is be actively supportive of diverse organizations.
- Several new organizations were identified as possible candidates for investment of NREL staff time and resources. They include:
 - Center for Women's Employment and Education
 - Hispanic Annual Salute
 - Latin American Education Foundation
 - Bernie Valdez Awards Luncheon
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon
 - NAACP Annual Event
 - Les Franklin Shaka Foundation's Scholarship Luncheon
 - Colorado Indian Chamber's Annual Event
 - Asian Chamber's Annual Event

- The Communications and Public Affairs Office will poll NREL staff members to see if they would like to participate in any of these groups as an NREL representative.

Stakeholder Outreach

Through its new Stakeholder Partnerships program, NREL will seek to ensure that we are reaching out to all audiences that can affect, or be affected by, NREL's activities. In addition, we are committed to working with these stakeholders to provide avenues for their input to our planning and decision-making processes. The goal of this program is to provide our stakeholders with a better understanding of the Laboratory's program activities, thus increasing their involvement in NREL's programs and activities.

Although the Stakeholder Partnerships program is still being developed, we are sensitive to the need to address stakeholder concerns of all types, and to make certain that our outreach activities reach a diverse set of audiences. We continually seek out new audiences that can not only benefit from NREL, but who can also contribute to the development of the Laboratory. We include diversity as one of the criteria we use to identify and target these new audiences. In addition, as we actively reach out to these audiences, there may be opportunities to incorporate messages from the NREL Diversity Plan. This process should be included in all of our interactions with our stakeholders.

Goal:

- Incorporate diversity awareness into NREL's Stakeholder partnership initiatives.

Strategies:

- Develop and implement new mechanisms to obtain input and feedback on how well the Laboratory is interacting with its stakeholders. These might take the form of surveys, focus groups, or input/feedback forms.
- Examine our current stakeholder activities and develop a baseline profile of who the stakeholders are, and how well NREL is currently communicating with them. Throughout this process, we will pay particular attention to the degree to which all populations are, or will be, represented.
- We plan to develop additional mechanisms to evaluate our stakeholder activities and ensure that we are interacting with diverse populations. These efforts will include the NREL National Advisory Council, the Colorado Executive Outreach program, and the World Leaders Forum.

Subcontracting

NREL's Commitment to Small Business

Central to NREL's mission is our commitment to small business. From collaborative research to technology transfer and purchasing, NREL seeks partnership opportunities with small companies to help commercialize renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and to supply the Laboratory with essential products and services. A key strategy in achieving our mission is to develop outstanding corporate and community partnerships that result in a desire by industry to conduct business with NREL. Part of this mission is to maintain an effective program ensuring diversity in NREL's operations. The Laboratory reaffirms its commitment to small businesses through a comprehensive and mature outreach program that combines proven techniques with the latest technology and best business practices.

Placement of Procurement Dollars

In FY 1998, NREL awarded more than (redacted)% of its procurement dollars - more than \$(redacted) million - to small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses. Of this amount, (redacted)% (\$(redacted) million) was awarded to small, disadvantaged businesses and (redacted)% (more than \$(redacted) million) was awarded to women-owned businesses. The Laboratory's support for small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses, however, extends far beyond purchasing and subcontracting dollars. The most successful programs in an organization are supported at the top of the organization; NREL's socioeconomic program is no exception. This approach ensures accountability and support at all levels of the organization. Furthermore, the small-business focus is such an integral part of performance standards for the Contracts and Business Services Office staff, that employees are rewarded for their contributions to the program.

This integrated approach cuts across organizational lines as well. NREL backs its commitment to small business with policies and programs that deliver results. Contracts and Business Services' procedures specify "set-asides" for small businesses. Small-business procurement opportunities and outreach are identified. Ensuring prompt payment is also a critical factor in the success of every small business; NREL's Finance Office works with the Contracts and Business Services Office to establish payment terms that accommodate small-business needs. Payment and deliverables tracking has been automated and placed on the Intranet. This allows NREL to respond rapidly to delays in the payment and deliverables receipt process.

Procurement Opportunities

NREL maximizes opportunities for small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses through a mature outreach program that emphasizes innovation. We are continuing our efforts to identify mentor-protege opportunities with small businesses. Recent trends such as faster procurement processes, contract consolidation, small-

purchase reform, e-commerce, and procurement cards have proved both an obstacle and an opportunity. For example, large companies have acquired many successful small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses that have traditionally provided goods and services. As a result, NREL has expanded its sourcing, and has entered into more "mentoring" relationships to continue its outstanding performance.

Business Opportunities with NREL

The Laboratory is a trendsetter in the area of small-business development. Its ongoing involvement with small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned firms has been recognized year after year. Among the awards received was the Minority Enterprises, Inc., Commitment and Chairperson's Award. The Laboratory was also honored with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Business Social Responsibility Award for its procurement outreach program and for contracting with small businesses. In addition, NREL was the recipient of the Energy Secretary's Small Business Program Award for its small-business outreach activities.

These awards cap an impressive list of NREL's achievements in small-business development: the SBA's 1998 Vision 2000 Award for Excellence in Advocacy, MEI, Chairperson's Award, the 1996 Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Procurement Outreach, the 1995 Energy Secretary's Award for Small Business Programs, the SBA's 1995 Dwight D. Eisenhower Award; the 1994 MEI Corporation of the Year Award; and the Small Business Administration's (SBA's) 1993 Award of Distinction. In addition, the Laboratory continues to expand its efforts to ensure supplier diversity and access to procurement opportunities for small and small disadvantaged firms. In 1998, NREL's nominee, Sunnyside/TempSide, Inc., was recognized as the MEI Corporation of the Year.

The Contracts and Business Services Office staff is actively involved in many business networking events and trade fairs that support small-business development. NREL provides sponsorship for these events. Representatives regularly attend the Small Business Administration Empowerment Breakfasts and participate in the Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunity Council (SADBOC) Fair. Staff members also identify new small-business contacts through NREL's involvement in the Hispanic and Indian Chambers of Commerce, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce, Minority Enterprise Development Week, and the Minority Enterprises, Inc., Growth Forum. Through the Partnership and Trade Fair, and the National Minority Supplier Development Council Conference, volunteers from throughout the Laboratory help with the conferences and meetings. Regular meetings between representatives of the Contracts and Business Services Office and small businesses encourage the formation of new alliances and foster an environment where partnerships are forged that support the strategic goals and objectives of the Laboratory.

The Laboratory's Small Business Liaison takes an active role in outreach activities and business development efforts. Currently, the Small Business Liaison represents NREL as the Vice-Chair and member of the Corporate Board of Directors of Minority Enterprises, Inc., and is the immediate past Chair and Secretary of the Corporate Board of this

organization. The Small Business Liaison is also a member of the Board of Directors for Minority Enterprise and Education Development Week, a national event that focuses on minority business development and education, and funds a scholarship program for disadvantaged students. The Small Business Liaison also chairs the National Association of Purchasing Management (NAPM) Minority Business/Diversity Awareness Committee, and is a member of the NAPM Minority Supplier Development Group. In addition, the Liaison is the Vice-Chair of the Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunity Council (SADBOC), and chairs the SADBOC's trade fair. The Small Business Liaison is also actively involved in a number of committees that support these nonprofit organizations, and has chaired the MEI Festival of Trade and co-chaired the SADBOC Small Business Opportunity Fair for 1998 and 1999.

These organizations and committees assist purchasing professionals nationwide in the development of meaningful minority purchasing programs. The groups also actively search out and assist historically underutilized businesses in their growth and development by linking them with purchasing professionals in the local community.

NREL's commitment to small business has never been stronger. And we will continue to seek new alliances with small businesses to help the Laboratory in achieving its vision of a sustainable energy future.

Goal:

- Facilitate contract awards to small, small disadvantaged, and small women-owned businesses.

Strategies:

- Continue to place a significant amount of procurement dollars with small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses as a percentage of total dollars spent.
- Continue to identify procurement opportunities for small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned small businesses.
- Continue to communicate effectively with the community at large regarding how to do business with NREL.
- Continue to effectively communicate NREL's commitment to diverse businesses to Laboratory staff and build support for NREL's small-business programs.

Economic Development and Technology Transfer

Making sure that renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies reach their markets is an important part of NREL's mission, which includes a comprehensive technology transfer program that benefits small businesses. Many of our technologies are ideally suited for small firms. Lacking the resources of large corporations, however, small businesses can find it difficult to compete effectively. Under a memorandum of understanding with the Small Business Administration Region VIII, NREL makes its laboratories, analytical facilities, and expertise available to small businesses within the Rocky Mountain region.

Although NREL has no explicit economic development charter or objective, economic development is an inherent component of our technology transfer and commercialization efforts. A key feature of these efforts is our collaboration with industry and academia throughout the technology development and commercialization cycles. This includes the subcontracting of more than half of our overall budget with the small businesses. NREL also provides assistance to start-up companies in the renewable energy businesses. We will continue to evaluate these activities and develop an appropriate plan for promoting diversity in all our programs.

Goals and Milestones

Workforce

- Design and implement an employee focus and satisfaction program to obtain staff feedback on the success of the Diversity Program at the Laboratory, which will include a mechanism to gather and track data.
- Submit a nomination to DOE for the May 2000 EEO/Diversity Award for Commitment. This award is given to one contractor/laboratory each year in recognition of organizations that have demonstrated, through their commitment and implementation of EEO/diversity practices, progress in building sound and notable programs.
- Perform in-depth analyses of statistical data in the following areas:
 - Determine the percentage of females and minorities hired versus percentage of applicants hired in the previous years.
 - Determine the percentage turnover of females and minorities versus that of white males in the previous years' trend line.
 - Determine the numbers of diverse students/interns/postdoctoral students versus those in the previous years' trend line.
 - Determine the number of females and minorities placed in key management positions and included in succession plans.
 - Determine the number of welfare-to-work hires.
 - Determine the number of AA/EEO-related complaints as compared to those in previous years.
 - Perform a yearly equity analysis on wage and salary adjustments.

Educational Outreach

Internal to NREL

- Improve the completion rate for diversity awareness training throughout the Laboratory from 81% to 85% by FY 2000. Baseline the number of diversity-related training programs conducted at NREL.
- By July 1999, offer at least one session of the NREL Diversity class to Washington, D.C. Office personnel.
- Communicate the NREL Diversity Plan to all new employees through the New Employee Orientation Program.
- Develop and present a course, entitled Managing Conflict in a Diverse Environment for the NREL Management Training Program.
- Proactively advertise the services that the Human Resources Office offers regarding building on the synergy brought about by the diverse groups at NREL.
- Endorse award and recognition programs and support teamwork and continuous improvement.

- Benchmark world-class companies on quality of work life versus family balance initiatives, recognizing that balance is key to employee effectiveness. Develop partnerships with local, regional, and national organizations and DOE contractors that foster EEO/Diversity goals.

External to NREL

- Establish an NREL Education Advisory Council that includes members from selected populations traditionally underrepresented in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.
- Increase over the 1999 baseline, the percentage of participants in NREL's education programs who are from populations traditionally underrepresented in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.
- Communicate models of successful HBCU/MI partnerships and promote their implementation in all technology areas across NREL.

Community Involvement and Outreach

- Identify representative populations in Colorado and their concerns about diversity at NREL.
- Include diversity concerns as a matter of routine business at appropriate public meetings and community gatherings sponsored by NREL.
- Improve relationships with neighboring communities.
- Strengthen mechanisms to interact effectively with diverse neighboring communities, to include but not be limited to, technical, and ES&H issues.
- Evaluate NREL's memberships to ensure that the Laboratory is involved with the broadest possible ethnically diverse organizations that are relevant to NREL's ethnically diverse population.
- Recruit NREL employees to participate in the Laboratory's work with diverse community groups.

Stakeholder Outreach

- The NREL Diversity Plan will be distributed to a cross section of NREL's stakeholders to elicit their input, which may be incorporated into future revisions of the plan.

Subcontracting

- Continue to place a significant amount of procurement dollars with small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned small businesses as a percentage of total dollars spent.
- Continue to identify procurement opportunities for small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned small businesses.
- Continue to communicate effectively with the community at large regarding how to do business with NREL.
- Continue to effectively communicate NREL's commitment to diverse businesses to Laboratory staff and build support for NREL's small-business programs.

Economic Development and Technology Transfer

- Develop goals for participation by small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned small businesses in cooperative research and development agreements and work for others agreements by FY 2000.

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